

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4693

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMCONSUL BELFAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 14151

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UK (NI)

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL INSIGHT ON TORY POLICY ON NORTHERN  
IRELAND

REF: LONDON 14033

1. CONSERVATIVE PARTY SHADOW SPOKESMAN ON NORTHERN  
IRELAND (AIREY NEAVE) TOLD EMBASSY OFFICER SEPTEMBER 11  
THAT SO-CALLED BIPARTISAN APPROACH TO NORTHERN IRELAND  
WAS UNDER HEAVY ATTACK FROM ALL QUARTERS AND THAT FROM  
PRACTICAL POINT-OF-VIEW BIPARTISANSHIP HAD BEEN REDUCED  
TO ONE SPECIFIC: AGREEMENT BETWEEN LABOR PARTY AND CON-  
SERVATIVES THAT UK COULD NOT WITHDRAW FROM THE SITUATION  
AND THAT BRITISH COULD NOT WITHDRAW UK ARMED FORCES.

2. NEAVE CONFIRMED CIRCUMSTANCES OF SPECIAL MEETING BE-  
TWEEN WILSON AND THATCHER REPORTED REFTEL, CALLING  
MEETING "ALMOST UNPRECEDENTED". HE FURTHER CONFIRMED HIS  
DEPARTURE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND SEPTEMBER 16, EXPRESSING  
GREAT PERSONAL DISAPPOINTMENT AT CANCELLATION HIS TRIP  
TO THE US IN VIEW OF MOUNTING IRISH PROBLEMS.

3. NEAVE STATED THAT CONSERVATIVES DISAGREED WITH  
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LABOR PARTY APPROACH, PARTICULARLY ON DETENTION POLICY

NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY REES HAS ESPOUSED. NEAVE FURTHER SAID THAT TORIES AND LABOR PARTY PROBABLY DIS-AGREE ENTIRELY BOTH ON HANDLING DAY-TO-DAY CRISES DEVELOPMENTS AS WELL AS ULTIMATE VISION OF HOW PROBLEM CAN BE RESOLVED OVER THE LONG HAUL.

4. NEAVE EXPRESSED CERTAIN OPTIMISM ON QUESTION OF DISSOLUTION CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION WHEN HE SAID SOME LATE INDICATIONS OF THAT DAY WERE A LITTLE MORE ENCOURAGING THAN HAD BEEN THE WILSON/THATCHER CONVERSATION. HE, TOO, SAID CONSERVATIVES WERE EXTREMELY SURPRISED BY SUDDENNESS OF CRAIG ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH THREATENED COLLAPSE OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION. HOWEVER, HE WAS UNABLE TO PRESENT CONVINCING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT FULLY ANY OPTIMISTIC CONCLUSIONS OF IRISH DEVELOPMENTS.

5. NEAVE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE PROSPECTS THAT HE WOULD RETURN FROM HIS "FIELD TRIP" WITH INSPIRATIONS ON NEW POLICY LINES. IN FACT, HE WAS PESSIMISTIC THAT HIS TRIP AND CONTACTS WITH NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS WOULD DO LITTLE MORE THAN CONFIRM HIS WORST APPREHENSIONS.

RICHARDSON

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